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Inside Information

CALIFORNIA MEDFLY CAMPAIGN CONTINUES

The outbreak of the Mediterranean fruitfly in California has made headlines daily in California and on frequent occasion in media in other parts of the Nation.

Helping get the information out have been Barbara Kohn of the Western information office administered by USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service at San Francisco, and George Farnham of the California Department of Food and Agriculture at Sacramento.

Both have worked out of the Medfly operations headquarters in Los Gatos in Santa Clara County, where the outbreak is heaviest. Kohn is scheduled to continue working from the emergency headquarters through the end of February.

One result of the Kohn-Farnham operation was inauguration of a new California daily publication, called appropriately the "Daily Medfly."

Not only does the daily report provide information internally for all federal, state and local officials involved in the program, but also is used as a valuable tool in the public information program.

1981 YEARBOOK COMMITTEE NAMED

Wayne Rasmussen, Economics and Statistics Service and USDA "historian," has been named 1981 USDA Yearbook committee chairman.

Don Looper, information director of the Foreign Agricultural Service, and Ovid Bay, of Science and Education Administration-Extension, are among the committee members.

They will provide, along with Rasmussen, editorial expertise to help produce another highly readable yearbook.

The working title of the 1981 yearbook is "Will There Be Enough Food?"

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COLLEGE CREDIT BY TELEPHONE ARRANGED

A rather innovative and novel approach to agricultural communications education took place in the Midwest recently.

Jim Evans, agricultural communications professor at the University of Illinois, called Herb Jackson, director of the Agricultural Marketing Service-administered regional information office of USDA in Chicago.

Purpose was to see if the regional office could explain to one of Evans' classes via a telephone hook-up how agricultural prices made their way from discovery to the news media.

Jackson and staff went one better.

They used their conference-call speaker to enable the officer-in-charge of the local AMS poultry market reporting office to explain how he gathers prices on poultry, eggs, turkeys, etc.

He also explained how he relays the information to various news services via AMS market news teletype system and code-a-phones.

Jackson filled in where needed to describe which wire services had tie-ins to the system and how other AMS market reporting offices often feed the media directly.

The proposed 10-minute session was interrupted after about 30 minutes with the sound of the bell to change classes.

Jackson says the students asked good questions about the process and were especially interested in how USDA market reporters avoided being given prices that were too high or low.

Evans said the students benefited from the session and suggested that perhaps other "classes by telephone" could be arranged for the future.

Results from this one try suggest others may wish to try similar arrangements.

FACT SHEETS ON PORK READIED

Publishing Center of USDA's Office of Governmental and Public Affairs is giving final review to 23 new fact sheets on pork before printing.

Science & Education Administration also is reviewing for final clearance.

Fact sheets were developed by information staff at Purdue University.

Meanwhile, the Publishing Center staff is beginning a fresh survey of state extension publications in preliminary steps toward deciding which would be most suitable for state-federal cooperative publication.

Among those being surveyed are about 50 in Spanish on various topics, mostly publications originated in Puerto Rico.

MAJOR NEWS RELEASES & SPEECHES AVAILABLE

USDA's News Center began a new weekly service last year, and it has proven to be quite popular.

The weekly issuance, "Major News Releases and Speeches," carries all significant national USDA press releases and speeches of USDA's top policy-makers issued during the week.

The releases and speeches are printed in a handy-size booklet each Friday evening for mailing over the weekend.

Anyone interested in receiving "Major News Releases and Speeches" should contact Ray Schleeter, acting head of the USDA News Center, Office of Governmental and Public Affairs, USDA, Washington, DC 20250, or call (202) 447-4026.

RADIO SHOW ON 'STRESS' PRODUCED

Stress management is being advocated as a serious subject for career-minded people.

George Holcomb of the Publishing Center in Office of Governmental & Public Affairs, on his own time, recently helped Northern Virginia Community College produce a radio show on stress management, biofeedback and "beyond."

The program is to be broadcast over 11 college network stations on Feb. 22 and March 1.

Holcomb teaches courses dealing with the subject at two campuses.

TDA HELPS USDA WITH COTTON OPEN HOUSE

Texas Department of Agriculture information staff helped with news coverage of the open house at USDA's Lamesa cotton marketing services office recently.

Loretta Ewart, information director, and Harvie Jordan, TDA broadcast specialist, provided the support.

The occasion was to show cotton growers how the new high volume instrument classification system is operating.

"HVI" system is being inaugurated by USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service in some field offices, replacing the old manual system.

Ewart developed a photo story of the new operation and mailed to leading Texas daily newspapers and trade publications.

Jordan's taped program went to 54 radio stations in the state.

Harold Bryson, director of the southwest information office administered by AMS, expressed his appreciation for the information support by the TDA staff.

This was pointed out as just another example of the close cooperation between state departments of agriculture information offices and the five AMS-administered USDA regional information offices.

TV SPECIAL ON SAINT HELENS COMING UP

Work has been completed on a special program dealing with the effects of Mt. Saint Helens' eruptions on the environment.

The special program will be used as a special on "A Better Way...", USDA's weekly television program produced by Don Elder of the Office of Governmental & Public Affairs Radio-Television Center.

The program will be shown on 96 television stations around the country.

Jim Johnson, acting assistant public affairs director for broadcasting and film, suggests you check your local TV stations for date and times.

Much of the film footage was shot shortly after the first major eruption.

Interviews were conducted with personnel from USDA's Forest Service, Soil Conservation Service and Science & Education Administration-Extension.

Arrangements are underway to make the film available for rental through the National Audiovisual Center in Washington, D.C.